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ABSTRACT

The reasons behind this failed educational leadership and what elected officials can do to energize reform movements are described in this book. The text focuses on three questions: (1) "Why do those in high elective office expose their ignorance of the substance and history of the educational reform movement?"; (2) "Why are these officials not motivated to try to learn why past efforts at school change have fallen away?"; and (3) "Why have the fruits of the reform movement been so meager considering the authority, resources, and obligation that these leaders have to education?" An overview of presidential leadership and the transformative power it can wield is provided. It describes why, in spite of this power, presidents do not act and shows what can happen when a leader, such as Thomas Jefferson, cares passionately about education. The monograph then turns to the status of education in America, examining the confusion surrounding test scores, the context of productive learning, and the content and style of teaching. Some experiments in education, such as charter schools, are discussed, along with expectations we should have of our leaders and the impact of race on education. (Includes approximately 75 references.) (RJM)

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